



GRADE

8

KENTUCKY

K-PREP

Kentucky Performance Rating For Educational Progress



ON-DEMAND WRITING SAMPLE ITEMS

Spring 2012

Writer's Reference Sheet

Grades 8, 10 and 11

Focusing

- Read the prompt and, if provided, the passage(s).
- Think about what the prompt is asking you to do.
- Think about key issues in the passage, if provided, that will help you fulfill the purpose of writing your response.

Pre-writing

- Think about your audience and purpose for writing.
- Use a pre-writing technique (e.g., brainstorming, webbing, drawing, outlining) to plan your response.
- Think of your thesis statement and supporting details.

Drafting

- Write your response in your response booklet.

Reviewing

- Reread your response to correct any errors that interfere with your ability to communicate your ideas to the audience.

If I am writing a **narrative**, did I

- establish a clear purpose?
- use a variety of techniques (e.g., dialogue, description, anecdote, rhetorical question, surprising fact) to engage my audience?
- convey a sense of significance of the experience?
- use a sequence of events that would unfold naturally for the reader?
- use concrete words and sensory details?

If I am writing to provide **information or explain**, did I

- establish a focused purpose?
- anticipate the needs of my audience?
- incorporate relevant background information from the reading passage (if a passage is provided)?
- support the thesis with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or examples?
- use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary?

If I am writing an **argument**, did I

- introduce a claim?
- acknowledge and distinguish the claim from counterclaims (alternate or opposing claims)?
- anticipate audience's knowledge and concerns?
- provide relevant background information from the reading passage (if a passage is provided)?
- maintain a clear focus?
- support claims with logical reasoning and relevant evidence (facts, details and examples)?
- use words and phrases to clarify the relationship among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence?

Scoring Criteria for On-Demand Writing

These criteria will be used to score your work.

Communicating with an Audience through Purpose/Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishes and maintains an authentic purpose• Addresses an appropriate audience• Establishes and maintains an awareness of audience needs
Communicating with an Audience through Idea Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develops ideas with sufficient depth and complexity to support audience and maintain a focused purpose• Elaborates ideas with details, support and examples specifically relevant to the audience and purpose• Applies characteristics of the mode
Communicating with an Audience through Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates coherent and effective text structure in relation to the purpose• Includes a logical progression of ideas• Maintains coherence within and between paragraphs• Uses effective transitional elements within and between paragraphs guiding the reader through the text and clarifying the relationship of events, ideas, concepts or arguments• Maintains control of sentence structure• Varies sentence structure effectively
Communicating with an Audience through Language and Conventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Selects and maintains word choices to effectively communicate with the audience• Employs voice and tone appropriate for audience and purpose• Communicates with audience effectively, applying correct grammar, usage and mechanics



Scoring Rubric for Kentucky On-Demand Writing

4 Points:

Writers at this score point level display consistent, though not necessarily perfect, writing skill, resulting in effective communication.

- The writer establishes and maintains focus on **audience and purpose** and effectively engages the audience by providing relevant background information necessary to anticipate its needs.
- The writer consistently **develops ideas** with depth and complexity to provide insight, support, and clarification of the topic. The writer consistently develops ideas using appropriate and effective examples, details, facts, explanations, descriptions, or arguments. In grades 5 and 6, writers may address counterclaims in support of opinion and argument; in grades 8, 10 and 11, counterclaims are addressed effectively to help support arguments. The writer may use a variety of techniques or approaches.
- The writer consistently **organizes** the writing by using a logical progression of ideas that flows within and between paragraphs. The writer consistently uses a **variety of sentence lengths and structures**. The writing includes a variety of transitional words and phrases that connects ideas and guides the reader. The writer uses appropriate organizational techniques (e.g., comparison/contrast, cause/effect, order of importance, reasons/explanations).
- The writer maintains an appropriate voice or tone. The writer consistently **chooses words** that are appropriate to the intended audience and purpose of the writing. The writer consistently uses correct **grammar, usage, and mechanics** (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization) to communicate effectively and clarify the writing.

3 Points:

Writers at this score point level display adequate writing skill, resulting in effective, though not consistent, communication.

- The writer adequately establishes focus on the intended **audience and purpose**, but may not consistently maintain this focus, losing sight of audience or purpose on occasion. The writer provides adequate background information that generally anticipates audience needs.
- The writer **develops ideas** with adequate support, and clarification of the topic through examples, details, facts, explanations, descriptions, or arguments. In supporting arguments and opinions, the writer in grades 5 or 6 may address counterclaims; the writer in grades 8, 10 and 11 addresses or considers counterclaims. The writer may use different techniques or approaches, but some are less successful than others; one technique may be prominent.
- The writer adequately **organizes** the writing by using a logical progression of ideas that generally flows from idea to idea, though connections between some ideas are less clear on occasion. The writer displays **variety in sentence lengths and structures**. The writing includes transitional words and phrases that generally guide the reader. The writer generally maintains organizational techniques, but organization and connection of ideas may become less clear on occasion.
- The writer may have occasional lapses in language that cause voice or tone to weaken. The writer **chooses words** that are generally appropriate for the intended audience and writing purpose. The writer adequately demonstrates correct **grammar, usage, and mechanics** (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization) to communicate. A few errors may occur that do not impede understanding.



2 Points:

Writers at this score point level display developing writing skill, resulting in less effective communication.

- The writer identifies a generalized **purpose or audience** but does not maintain focus on both. Instead, the writer focuses more on the task (creating a letter, speech, etc.) than the actual purpose or intended audience. Irrelevant or inconsistent background information demonstrates a general lack of awareness of audience needs.
- The writer demonstrates inconsistent **development of ideas** often presenting facts (sometimes in isolation from one another) with little insight, interpretation, or clarification. The writer provides minimal or irrelevant examples and/or details for support. The writer in grades 8, 10, and 11 may attempt to address counterclaims in support of arguments or is unsuccessful in the attempt. If the writer attempts to use different techniques or approaches, their relation to the writing purpose may be unclear.
- The writer demonstrates some attempt at **organization**, but often places ideas in an unclear order that disrupts the natural flow or cohesion. The writer occasionally uses varied sentence structures, but these appear alongside mostly **simple sentences**. Transitions are simple and infrequent. The writer may use organizational strategies inappropriately or ineffectively, such as attempting to use a comparison when it is not warranted.
- The writer often uses language that causes voice or tone to weaken or emerge only on occasion. The writer occasionally chooses appropriate **words**, but these appear alongside language that is simple or inappropriate for the intended audience or purpose. Frequent errors in **grammar, usage, and mechanics** (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization) appear alongside occasional control of these features and may impede understanding of the text.

1 Point:

Writers at this score level demonstrate little or no writing skill, resulting in mostly ineffective communication.

- The writer may identify a general topic but demonstrates little or no awareness of **purpose or audience**. The writer does not provide background or show awareness of the needs of the audience.
- The writer gives little or no purposeful **development of ideas**, interpretation, insight or clarification. The writer provides no examples and/or details for support or the support is inaccurate or irrelevant. The writer in grades 8, 10, 11 does not address counterclaims in support of argument or opinion.
- The writer offers little or no **organizational structure**, placing ideas in no logical order. The writer uses little if any **variety in sentence structures**. Ineffective or absent paragraph divisions create a lack of cohesion. Few, if any, transition words or phrases are used.
- The writer's tone or voice is either inappropriate or absent. The writer uses simple or inappropriate **words**. Errors that appear in **grammar, usage, and mechanics** (e.g., spelling, punctuation, capitalization) impede understanding of the text.



Writing situation:

Animals have the same five senses as humans. However, sometimes these senses are highly developed and become valuable “super senses.”

Animals’ Special Senses

Senses	Animals
Sight	Raptors or birds of prey have the best eyesight. The buzzard is able to see small animals while circling 15,000 feet in the air. The falcon is able to see clearly even when diving to earth at 100 miles per hour. Owls and cats are able to see in the dark.
Hearing	Cats can identify the tone of a sound and easily locate where it came from. Owls can detect the location of a sound and identify the direction it came from in less than 0.01 of a second. Dolphins use echolocation to move around in murky water. Bats bounce sounds off objects and other animals and can quickly tell the location, directions, and physical qualities of another animal up to 18 feet away.
Taste	A catfish has up to 250,000 taste buds. It could recognize one drop of soda in an enormous swimming pool. Flies and butterflies taste with their feet. They can quickly recognize whether their landing space is tasty food.
Smell	Bears have a superior sense of smell. It lets them identify danger from humans. They can recognize a human scent even many hours after the human has passed by. They can also detect food from a distance. Cats and dogs are able to identify food, enemies, and home territory. Dogs are also able to identify other animals and remember the odor. Sharks can smell a drop of blood from a mile away.
Touch and movement	A catfish has smooth skin and tiny hairs that recognize even the smallest movements. Some insects like the cockroach are able to detect movement of less than one millionth of a millimeter. Crocodiles and alligators have receptors that detect movement and location of other animals in the water.

Writing directions:

Write a speech for the school’s science club to explain how one animal’s special sense helps it deal with its environment. Include information from the table and your own ideas in your speech.



Annotated Student Response

SAMPLE 1-POINT RESPONSE

Writing

1. Catfish have a cool special they can detect almost all movements. This helps them with their environment because if they live in a place where there the prey they can detect the movement of their predator and swim a way or if people are fishing for them they can feel the movement of the line. If they live in a place where they are on the top of their food chain then they can feel the movement of their prey if there close by.



ANNOTATION — 1-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 1
Score Point 1

This writer identifies a general topic (*Catfish have a special they can detect almost all movements*) but demonstrates little awareness of the needs of the audience because no background information is provided. The writing does not contain an organizational structure or purposeful development of ideas as the writing consists of a list of loosely related ideas (. . . *the can detect the movement of their predator and swim a way., or if people are fishing for them the can feel the movement of the line. . . in a place where they are on the top their food chain then they can fell the movement of their prey*). The absence of paragraph divisions reflects the lack of development and organization. Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics impede understanding of the text.



Annotated Student Response

SAMPLE 2-POINT RESPONSE

Writing

1. Sharks are very interesting animals. They have a super sense of smell. "They smell a drop of blood from a mile away." Sharks use their sense of smell to find food, smell their predators and locate humans.

Sharks can use their sense of smell to find food. Most sharks are meat eaters. They look for fish, dolphins, and other sources of food. If any of these were to get cut and bleed, sharks could smell the blood from a mile away. They can also smell food.

A shark can smell their predators. This will help them know when a predator will attack. It will help them get away from them.

A shark can also smell humans. Humans have muscles, which is meat. A shark will eat humans too if they smell them and think they are food.

A shark has a back fin that helps it swim and turn quickly. It also has three openings to help them sense movement of things in the water. They have a strong sense of taste to know what's in the water, but their special sense is smell.



ANNOTATION — 2-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 1
Score Point 2

The writer identifies a generalized purpose and audience (*Sharks are very interesting animals. They have a super sense of smell*) **but provides only limited background information which demonstrates a lack of awareness of audience needs. While the writing contains some idea development, the supporting details and examples offer little insight or interpretation** (*A shark can also smell humans. Humans have muscles, which is meat. Shark will eat humans too if the smell them and think they are food*). **The writer demonstrates some attempt at organization by generally grouping ideas by paragraph. There are some varied sentence structures, but these appear alongside many simple sentences** (*Sharks can use their sense of smell to find food. Most sharks are meat eaters. They look for fish, dolphins and other sources of food*). **Errors that occur in grammar, usage, and mechanics do not impede understanding.**



Annotated Student Response

SAMPLE 3-POINT RESPONSE

Writing

1.

Smell like a Bear

I am sure we have all heard the phrases "eyes like a hawk" or "as fast as a cheetah". Maybe I know the next phrase to be cliche'd, which is "smell like a bear". Before you ask me why in the world would you ever associate smell with a bear, let me explain.

Bears actually have a very enhanced sense of smell. They can smell food from very large distances away, which explains why Yogi is always able to find those picnic baskets! Their eyesight is the reason for their great smell power. Since they cannot see very well, they have to rely on their nose for their well-being.

Also, they can use their sense of smell for more than just distinguishing different aromas. Unlike humans, bears are able to smell things like danger or home territory. They use their nose to know which way to go to avoid predators, such as humans. This is especially helpful to a mother with cubs.

Speaking of humans, I bet you didn't know we had a strong odor to us. Whether

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Writing

it is your B.O. or the soap you applied that morning, a bear can smell it. Every time you go anywhere, you leave a scent trail. Bears use their keen sense of smell to pick up on those trails, and most of the time try to avoid them, unless they are in the mood for a man-chop sandwich!

You would be surprised how much there actually is under that huge lump of coal on a bear's muzzle. Bears have one of the most advanced senses of smell in the entire world. They are truly remarkable creatures. Maybe you will think twice next time about having a picnic in the middle of the woods.



GRADE 8 — Writing

ANNOTATION — 3-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 1
Score Point 3

The writer adequately establishes focus on the intended audience and purpose by providing background information that generally anticipates audience needs (*Bears actually have a very enhanced sense of smell. They can smell food from very large distances away, which explains why Yogi is always able to find those picnic baskets!*). Ideas are developed with adequate support and clarification of the topic (*Whether it is your B.O. or the soap you applied that morning, a bear can smell it. Every time you go anywhere, you leave a scent trail. Bears use their keen sense of smell to pick up on these trails, and most of the time try to avoid them*), though development is not always consistent. The writing is adequately organized, with a logical progression of ideas and transitional words and phrases that generally connect ideas and guide the reader (*Also, Speaking of humans*). The writer chooses words that are generally appropriate for the intended audience and purpose of the writing. The writer consistently uses correct grammar, usage, and mechanics.



Annotated Student Response

SAMPLE 4-POINT RESPONSE

Writing

1. Have you ever noticed how cats have an incredible sense of smell. It's almost like a super power for them. It helps them in their every day life to do things that are necessary for survival. You may be wondering how their sense of smell could help them survive. Well, that's simple. Their sense of smell is far greater than ours. I think that a cat's sense of smell helps it deal with its environment by helping it figure out who is who, what's food and what isn't, and how to find their way back home.

Cats identify people by their scent. Once they smell a person then in their head they match that scent with that person. This helps them keep track of who they know and who's foreign to them. Also, they can smell out a hostile animal. For example, if they are in the woods and they smell a coyote, they can detect it and seek shelter. This may come in handy in the future. Another reason why their sniffer comes in handy is because they can tell whether you're friend or enemy. Like I said earlier, they match scents with people and by this they can tell if you're nice or mean to them by their memories.

A cat can smell out what's good food and what they shouldn't eat. This can be of use for survival because they can smell out what is harmful if eaten. Although cats don't eat wild weeds and



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berries all the time, if they were hungry enough they might eat some. Their nose can tell them whether the berries or weeds could be harmful if eaten. Also, they can smell out what's edible and non-edible. You never see a cat chewing on a rock or a twig do you? No, that's because cats can smell out if an object is edible or not. And, cats can smell if an animal that is dead is rotten or ready to eat. If they ate a rotten animal, then they could become sick or die.

A last reason that a cat's smell helps it survive is that it can help them find their way back home. Have you ever noticed how cats like to roam around to lots of places? Well, what if they got lost. That's when their nose comes in handy. They can smell familiar territory and find their way back home. Last year, my neighbor told me a story of a time when her cat got stolen. She was very sad and then, one day, her cat came to her door. Cat's noses are like GPS's helping them find their way home. Cats also like to go hunting. How do you think they find their way back home? Well, they sniff out familiar territory and follow their nose.

In conclusion, a cat's sense of smell is necessary for survival. They use their nose in many ways to adapt and deal with their environment.



ANNOTATION — 4-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 1
Score Point 4

The writer establishes and maintains focus on audience and purpose, and effectively engages the audience by providing relevant background information (*Have you ever noticed how cats have an incredible sense of smell. It's almost like a super power for them*). **The ideas are consistently developed with depth and complexity using appropriate and effective examples, details, facts, explanations** (*Last year, my neighbor told me a story of a time when her cat got stolen. She was very sad and then, one day, her cat came to her door. Cat's noses are like GPS's helping them find their way home. Cats also like to go hunting. How do you think they find their way back home? Well, they sniff out familiar territory and follow their nose*). **The response progresses logically and ideas flow naturally and cohesively within and between paragraphs. The writer consistently uses a variety of sentence lengths and structures. The writer chooses words that are appropriate to the intended audience and purpose of the writing** (*match that scent, edible and non-edible, GPSs*). **Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are infrequent and do not impede the reader's understanding of the text.**



Green Invaders

They may look harmless, even quite lovely, with curling tendrils, broad leaves, or many blossoms. However, some plant species that are not native to particular environments can become invasive (act like an invader) by growing rapidly and stifling the growth of pre-existing plants.

Are All Nonnative Plants Invasive?

Many of the plants that are familiar to us did not originally grow in North America. They were brought here by settlers from other continents. Familiar grains such as wheat and oats are now at home and are basic elements of American agriculture. The characteristics of a nonnative plant (one that has been introduced to locations outside its natural range) that cause it to be considered invasive are its aggressive growth and reproductive habits.

How Do Invasive Species Cause Harm?

Nonnative plants are often very hearty, and as they spread, they reduce the diversity of plant life that existed in the location where they have taken root. They compete with native plants and may eventually displace them. In addition to affecting local plant life, invasive species can harm natural ecosystems in many ways. Among these are by:

- Changing the characteristics of the soil
- Repelling or even killing native insects
- Harboring plant diseases

How Did Invasive Plants Become a Problem?

Some invasive plants like Purple Loosestrife, for example, were first introduced to a habitat in which they were not native by unsuspecting gardeners. This plant quickly spread as its seeds washed into waterways and were deposited in wetlands and woodlands. Like so many invasive species, this plant has the ability to sprout from tiny fragments of its roots as well, so efforts to remove it often do not work.

Another famous invader is Kudzu, a vine native to Japan that was first introduced in the United States in the late 1800s and quickly caught on as a means of erosion control. However, these vines grow so well that they can destroy entire forests by blocking the sunlight needed by native trees.

Sometimes, invasive plants make their way into environments to which they are not native purely by accident. Bird and animal droppings may allow for the spread of seeds. Seeds can also be transported in the goods shipped from one region to another or on the muddy tires of vehicles used to transport these goods.



Writing Part B

What Can We Do About Invasive Plants?

Individuals help reduce the problems created by invasive plants by finding out which plants are invasive in the area where they live. They learn to identify those plants and remove them from their own property when possible. Several state environmental organizations have worked together in the creation of a poster of “Kentucky’s Least Wanted Plants.” Others like the Kentucky Exotic Pest Plant Council work to raise public awareness about the problem of invasive plants and to encourage volunteers to become “weed warriors” in the fight against those green invaders.

Writing situation:

Your science teacher has asked each student in class to help make others aware of nonnative plant species that were introduced outside of their natural range and the issues they can cause. You read the passage “Green Invaders,” and you decide to use the news media to create awareness creating an argument against allowing this invasion to continue.

Writing directions:

Write an article to be published on the local news station’s blog to create awareness of the issue of nonnative plants. In your blog, create your argument for the need to control the spread of invasive nonnative plants with a community action plan. Use information from the passage to support your plan.



Annotated Student Response

SAMPLE 1-POINT RESPONSE

Writing

2. Invasive plants are destroying our good plants. We as a Community or greater need to find these invasive plants and put an end to the destruction of all the beautiful plants in the world. We need to learn how to identify them and remove them from this area. The Kentucky Exotic Pest Plant Council is working to raise awareness so we need to help them.



Writing Part B

GRADE 8 — Writing

ANNOTATION — 1-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 2

Score Point 1

This writer identifies a general purpose (*Invasive plants are destroying our good plants. We as a Community or greater neet to find thees invasive plants*) **but demonstrates little awareness of the needs of the audience because little background information is provided. Similarly, the writer gives little purposeful development of ideas. The writer does not provide or clarify details** (*and put an end to the destruction of all the beautiful plants in the world*) **and offers no organizational structure. Errors in grammar, usage and mechanics impede understanding of the text.**



Annotated Student Response

SAMPLE 2-POINT RESPONSE

Writing

2. Breaking News! Kentucky's Exotic Pest Plant Council just gave us some tragic news. They said there has been some issues with some of these non-native plants lately and to be sure to aware everyone that these harmful plants are spreading like wild fire.

Are Community needs to have a action plan to stop the spread. We should all go out side and check to see if any of the following plants are around and get them removed. Purple loosestrife or kudzu. If you don't know what they look like be sure to look them up on the Internet.

Even though these plants might be pretty they grow rapidly and stifling the growth of pre-existing plants. Also not all non-native plants are bad. In fact, many of the plants that are



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familiar to us didn't originally grow in North America.

These Invasive Species cause harm by changing the characteristics of the soil, Repelling or even killing native insects, and harboring plant diseases. If we stop these plants from spreading, we can save the soil, plants, and insects.

So everyone, be sure to be on the look out for these deadly plants, you never know if they are messing your plants and soil up.



GRADE 8 — Writing

ANNOTATION — 2-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 2

Score Point 2

The writer identifies a general purpose (*Kentucky's Exotic Pest Plant Council just gave us some tragic news. They said there has been some issues with some of there non-native plants lately*) **but demonstrates little awareness of the needs of the audience because little background information is provided** (*Purple loosestrife or Kudza! If you don't know what they look like be sure to look them up*). **The writer demonstrates some attempt at organization by generally grouping ideas by paragraphs, though the placement of some ideas disrupts the logical progression** (*Also not all non-native plants are bad*). **There are some varied sentence structures. The writer occasionally chooses appropriate words, but these appear alongside simple, general words. Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics appear alongside occasional control of these features.**

**Annotated Student Response****SAMPLE 3-POINT RESPONSE**

Writing

2. What are invasive plants, you ask? Well they are just regular, everyday plants when you look at them, seeming harmless, but that isn't true. The name invasive can mean invader, to put in simpler terms. These plants can harm you and the air around you, by getting diseases from the plants or changing the soil, hurting plants that help us live. Most nonnative plants are an invasive plants, because they are brought from different countries.

Invasive plants are plants that grow rapidly and hurt the growth of preexisting plants. These are mostly nonnative, these plants grow and spread quickly killing the other plants in the area. This can harm us because some and most of the plants that the invasive plants kill, we need their oxygen to breathe and live. These plants harm the natural ecosystem in many ways. In addition to this it changes the characteristics of the soil, causing plants not to grow in that area. The invasive plants also harbor plant diseases that could kill the plants around us that we need.

You may be wondering how did this come about or become a problem. Well many plants grow and these just happen to be harmful. One plant is called Purple loosestrife, this plant first came about by being nonnative



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by unsuspecting gardeners. This plant, like all other invasive plants, is hard to be removed whether you use plant killers they still come back. Another plant is called the Kudzu this plant is made of vines and is native to Japan. It started in the United States in the 1800's, this plant is very harmful because it can kill a whole forest.

We now know how harmful all these different plants can be, but what are we supposed to do about them? Well first you need to identify the different invasive plants to know which plants are which. To know you can get the "Kentucky's Least Wanted Plants" poster or the poster for your area. But instead of identifying all the invasive plants you just need to know the ones in your area that can harm you. If you want to save the plants in your area and yourself, step up and become a "weed warrior."

Invasive plants can not only hurt other plants but they can hurt you too. You need to take a stroll and look for the ones in your area because if you don't find them they will spread. Look for the signs of invasive plants which are quickly growing and quickly reproducing. Remember that invasive plants may look harmless, but as most people say looks are deceiving.



ANNOTATION — 3-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 2

Score Point 3

The writer adequately establishes focus on the intended audience and purpose (*What are invasive plants, you ask?*) **by providing background information** (*In addition to this it changes the characteristics of the soil, causing plants not to grow in that area. The invasive plants also harbor plant diseases that could kill the plants around us that we need*). **Ideas are developed with adequate support and clarification of the argument** (*But instead of identifying all the invasive plants you just need to know the ones in your area that can harm you*), **though the development of ideas is not consistent**. **The writer also considers counterclaims by showing the impact of not taking action** (*Well, they are just regular, everyday plants when you look at them, seeming harmless, but that isn't true. . . . whether you use plant killers they still come back*). **The writing is adequately organized using a logical progression of ideas and transitional words and phrases that generally connect ideas and guide the reader**. **The writer chooses words that are generally appropriate for the intended audience and purpose of the writing**. **Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics only occasionally impede understanding**.



Annotated Student Response

SAMPLE 4-POINT RESPONSE

Writing

2. Nonnative plants are beautiful and some are also colorful, but these pretty plants are deadly to other plants. These plants can kill other plants from the roots, they can kill helpful insects, and they can kill plants as big as trees! These plants need to be stopped as soon as possible. These three most important facts and/or details that you should know are how they first came to the U.S., how deadly they can be, and how they can be stopped. These plants can effect our lives in the future and may hurt us. I agree that they may be pretty, but I also agree that they need to be stopped.

How the problem first started was that they first came to the U.S. if they hadn't of come here then it wouldn't be a problem. One way that the nonnative plants came here was that birds or animal droppings spread the seeds from place to place. Like how birds eat berries and spread them to different places, is like how it is for these nonnative plants. Another way that the plants are transported is that they may be shipped with other good from a different country. For example, they



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could accidentally be picked with other plants from a different country and be shipped here. Lastly, the plants could accidentally be brought here by simply picking it up on a muddy tire. By simply driving through a rainforest or jungle, you could bring these deadly plants to the U.S. Simple things like this could lead to killing plants and trees, so this is why they need to be controlled and restricted.

Cute, little, innocent, colorful plants could make you want to melt, but these plants could be so deadly that they could literally make other plants melt. These plants carry diseases and give them to other plants, they could also suffocate other plants. For example, these plants' roots are so fine that they surround other plants' roots and restrict them from getting nutrients. Another deadly trait that these plants have is that they could kill trees, this could take away our oxygen supply. Trees are our filtration system for our air, so if we lose our trees then we won't have clean air to breathe.



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The last deadly thing about these plants is that some can even kill an entire ecosystem. Some plants like the "Kudzu" cover an entire forest and restrict any living thing to receive any sunlight by its branches and leaves. These plants could not only kill one plant, but it could kill hundreds of plants.

Considering on all of the terrible things that these plants do, I'd say that they need to be stopped. Thankfully, I have a few suggestions to stop these killing plants. One of my suggestions is that everyone in a community can learn to identify the plants so that people could stop it on contact. If this happens then the plants would be immediately stopped and they would not spread. Another suggestion I have is that a community could start a program to warn others about these plants and how deadly they can be. This could keep everyone safe from the plant and possibly lead to people digging up the plant. Last but not least, is that we could create an organization and have volunteers help dig up these plants and stop



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them once and for all. With just a little help and some community service, we could help stop these deadly plants.

If we don't stop these plants now, then in the long-run we wouldn't have clean oxygen to breathe. I understand that many of these plants may be beautiful and astonishing, however these plants are destructive. They are killing many of the plants that we love and many plants that we need to survive with. Nonnative invasive plants should not be allowed in the U.S. Considering all of the horrible things that they do, I think that we would all be safer without them. Every action leads to a chain reaction, so just by doing the little things to help stop these plants would make this country a nonnative invasive plants-free country.

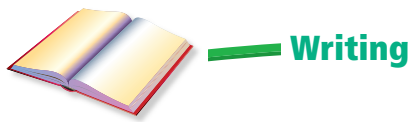


GRADE 8 — Writing

ANNOTATION — 4-POINT RESPONSE

Grade 8, Prompt 2
Score Point 4

The writer establishes and maintains focus on audience and purpose, and effectively engages the audience by providing relevant background information (*Nonnative plants are beautiful and some are also colorful, but these pretty plants are deadly to other plants. These plants can kill other plants from the roots, they can kill helpful insects, and they can kill plants as big as trees!*). **The ideas are consistently developed with depth and complexity using appropriate and effective examples, details, facts, and explanations** (*Lastly, the plants could accidentally be brought here by simply picking it up on a muddy tire. By simply driving through a rainforest or jungle, you could bring these deadly plants to the U.S.*). **The writer also addresses counterclaims** (*I agree that they may be pretty, but I also agree that they need to be stopped. . . . Cute, little, innocent, colorful plants could make you want to melt I understand that many of these plants may be beautiful and astonishing, however these plants are destructive*). **The response progresses logically and ideas flow naturally and cohesively within and between paragraphs. The writer uses a variety of sentence lengths and structures. Errors in usage and mechanics, though present, do not impede understanding of the text.**



Item Information

Question Number	Question Type	Passage Title	KCAS Standard	Mode
Part A	Stand Alone	NA	W.8.2	Informative/ Explanatory
Part B	Passage Based	Green Invaders	W.8.1	Argumentative